

# Environmental Responsibilities in Construction



Are you involved in construction projects? Are you an owner, developer, contractor, subcontractor, architect, construction manager, or design engineer? If so, you may be responsible for meeting requirements of federal, state, and local environmental regulations. Just like us here in Axis Capital Group, a construction company based in Singapore and Jakarta, Indonesia.

## **Pre-Construction**

Even before the start of the construction, during the bidding and the plans and preparations, you already have a construction responsibility. If you do not assign responsibility for environmental compliance before you start the project, your project may be put into jeopardy.

It is good that people in your team are aware what their role in the project would be and to avoid hiring and paying fraud people in your team. Get to know them in a meeting and, of course, discuss the important environmental projects to them. Review every part that you should be concerned about and complete a checklist prior to breaking ground. You will need to help ensure that your environmental requirements are not overlooked during construction.

## **During Construction**

No matter how thoroughly you prepare for a construction project, you may still encounter unexpected situations requiring environmental knowledge and understanding. Be prepared of unplanned event and make sure you have a contingency plan for that.

### **Environmental protections:**

- **Water pollution:** As a result of construction, the soil is displaced from its original location which can possibly cause environmental problems in the future. Runoff can occur during storms which can possibly transfer harmful pollutants through the soil to rivers, lakes, wetlands, and coastal waters.
- **Endangered species:** If endangered species have been found on the construction site, the site must be shut down for some time. The construction site must be shut down for as long as it takes for authorities to make a decision on the situation. Once the situation has been assessed, the contractor makes the appropriate accommodations to not disturb the species.
- **Vegetation:** There may often be particular trees or other vegetation that must be protected on the job site. This may require fences or security tape to warn builders that they must not be harmed.
- **Wetlands:** The contractor must make accommodations so that erosion and water flow are not affected by construction. Any liquid spills must be maintained due to contaminants that may enter the wetland.
- **Historical or cultural artifacts:** Artifacts may include arrowheads, pottery shards, and bones. All work comes to a halt if any artifacts are found and will not resume until they can be properly examined and removed from the area.